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**Cuba: Tactics and Strategy
for Central America**

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Excerpts from:

Key Judgments

There were tentative signs last fall that the Castro regime might be considering a political solution to the Central American problem. It was not until mid-February 1982, however, that Havana adopted an unequivocal public stance supporting negotiations. Since Mexican President Lopez Portillo made general proposals in that direction during a speech in Managua on 21 February, top Cuban leaders on several occasions have echoed his call not only for negotiations on Central America but for bilateral talks on Cuban-US differences as well.

We believe Cuba's repeated offers to negotiate on Central America are an effort to buy time and gain a propaganda advantage. They have not been accompanied by any signs of a willingness to make concessions on the key issue of Havana's supplying arms to insurgents. On the contrary, Cuba insists on maintaining and practicing that "right." Furthermore, while top Cuban spokesmen insist that Havana has not provided Cuban arms to Salvadoran insurgents for over a year,

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shows that claim to be false. Havana's policy of publicly heaping verbal abuse on top US leaders while calling for negotiations is further evidence of Cuban insincerity.

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The hard evidence indicates that Cuban support for Central America's active insurgencies is continuing apace, that Cuban machinations to promote armed struggle in Honduras are being intensified, and that Havana still hopes eventually to destabilize the Monge administration in Costa Rica. Meanwhile, Cuban links to Nicaragua are growing stronger, and Havana is trying to draw the Sandinista junta further into the Soviet orbit.

We doubt that the Castro regime will be deterred until there are enough serious guerrilla setbacks in the field to convince the Cuban leadership that its resources are being spent fruitlessly and its support for subversion is causing Cuba to become isolated in the international community. Even then, a policy of retrenchment would only be temporary. In short, we believe Havana will persevere in the promotion of violent revolution as long as the guerrilla elite continues to rule in Cuba.

SecretALA 82-10117
August 1982